

## INTRODUCTION

The Office of Product and Industry Standards in the Division of Consumer Protection has the responsibility of ensuring that fertilizer and agricultural liming materials distributed in Virginia are properly labeled, registered, and meet the labelers guarantee. The Fertilizer and Agricultural Liming Materials Laws provide for the collection and testing of samples of regulated materials and for assessments for variance from guarantee on deficient lots. When it is possible to identify the purchaser of the deficient material, the assessment is paid to that purchaser. These laws protect the consumer and enhance fair competition between manufacturers in the marketplace, as well as provide the basis for service to other State agencies.

During the 2002-2003 fiscal year (FY = July 1 thru June 30), a total of 770,017 tons of fertilizer products were reported sold. This is a decrease of 143,346 tons or 16% below the 2001-2002 reported tonnage of 913,363 tons. This number excludes lime, mulch and peat; but includes gypsum, soil amendments, soil conditioners and horticultural growing media. Farm use tonnage for 2002-2003 was 578,539 tons which is a decrease of 108,121 tons or 16% below the farm use tonnage for 2001-2002 of 686,660 tons. Non-farm use tonnage for 2002-2003 was 191,478 tons which is a decrease of 35,225 tons or 16% below the 2001-2002 reported tonnage of 226,703 tons.

The suppliers of agricultural liming material reported 393,420 tons sold during the 2002-2003 fiscal year. This is a decrease of 272,219 tons or 41% below fiscal year 2001-2002 reported tonnage of 665,639 tons.

In our opinion, the large decrease in total tons of fertilizer and lime for this fiscal year could be attributed to the unusually wet conditions during the reporting year.